

WO 00/20811

PCT/FI99/00827

9

CLAIMS

1. Method for the processing of food portions, in which method the food portions are delivered to a cold storage space (1) situated by a user, from said cold storage space the food portion wanted each time is moved in connection with the activation of the heating phase to a heating unit (3) where the food portion is heated, after which the food portion is ready for serving, characterised in that the preparation of food portions ready to be eaten is accomplished using a single apparatus which comprises at least a space for the cold storage, heating and serving of food portions, and which apparatus is connected when needed over a telecommunication network or alike with a supplier of foodstuffs or with some other organisation, such as a service and maintenance, or a main frame computer or a server computer where the information needed is stored.
2. Method as defined in claim 1, characterised in that the order for new food portions is done over the telecommunication network.
3. Method as defined in claim 1 or 2, characterised in that the selection and the heating of the food portions is performed when needed by remote activation of the apparatus over the telecommunication network.
4. Apparatus for the processing of food portions, said apparatus comprising at least a cold storage space (1) for the storage of food portions and a heating unit (3), characterised in that the cold storage space (1) and the heating unit (3) are integrated into a single assembly, which has been ar-

T02040-040201

WO 00/20811

PCT/FI99/00827

10

ranged to be controlled by means of a control centre (6) and a user interface (7).

5 5. Apparatus as defined in claim 4, characterised in that, in addition to the cold storage space (1), heating unit (3) and user interface (7), the apparatus comprises a telecommunication unit (5), which serves to provide communication with a supplier of food portions, a failure data monitoring party or
10 equivalent.

6. Apparatus as defined in claim 4 or 5, characterised in that the apparatus comprises a transfer mechanism (2), which has been arranged to transfer
15 food portions from the cold storage space into the heating unit and, if necessary, further to a serving device (4).

7. Apparatus as defined in claim 4, 5 or 6, characterised in that the apparatus comprises a data processing section (9), which has been arranged to function as a supervising element storing and distributing information and activating the functions of the
20 apparatus.

25 8. Apparatus as defined in any one of the preceding apparatus claims, characterised in that the apparatus is connected to a telecommunication network, such as a telephone network or internet(8), over
30 which the ordering of food portions, remote operation of the apparatus, transmission of failure information etc. have been arranged to be effected.

35 9. Apparatus as defined in any one of the preceding apparatus claims, characterised in that the apparatus comprises a system for controlling the user's nutrition level and diet.

09606810-040201